

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

April 2, 2009

The Honorable Jose E. Serrano  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee  
on Financial Services  
2227 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jo Ann Emerson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee  
on Financial Services  
2440 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Serrano and Ranking Member Emerson:

We are writing to let you know of our strong support for a FY 2010 funding level of \$100 million for the Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant program, to include \$2 million from within the total amount appropriated for the National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute (Institute), which is specifically authorized by section 805 of P.L. 109-469. In light of the current economic crisis, we understand that this year's funding constraints are significant; however, we believe the proven effectiveness of the DFC program warrants an increase of \$10 million over the FY 2009 appropriated level. The national cross-site evaluation of the program revealed that DFC grantee communities have significantly lower substance use rates as compared to those communities without DFC funded coalitions. In addition, funding for the DFC program has historically been insufficient to meet the overwhelming demand for the program.

It is crucial that communities around the country are organized to respond to their local drug problems in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. The DFC program recognizes that federal anti-drug resources must be invested at the community level with those who have the most power to reduce the demand for drugs, namely parents, teachers, business leaders, the media, religious leaders, law enforcement officials, youth and others.

The DFC program empowers local citizens to get directly involved in solving their own community's drug issues by marrying grassroots community organizing with data-driven planning and implementation. Research substantiates that effective prevention hinges on the extent to which the entire community works comprehensively and collaboratively to implement a full array of education, prevention, enforcement, treatment and recovery initiatives. DFC grantees implement environmental strategies to address their community's unique substance use and abuse issues. Such an approach ensures the entire community, rather than just a select number of individuals, benefits from prevention. By targeting all community sectors with comprehensive strategies, anti-drug coalitions work to change community environments and norms to discourage drug use.



The community coalition model has proven extremely effective, and has achieved impressive outcomes:

- In Glen Cove, New York, the Substance Abuse Free Environment Coalition contributed to a **22.2% decrease** in the number of 10th grade students reporting past year use of marijuana, from 41.4 in 2003 to 32.2% in 2005.
- In Kansas City, Missouri, the Northland Coalition contributed to a **42.2% decrease** in past 30 day use of marijuana among 10<sup>th</sup> graders, from 25% in 2000 to 14.4% in 2008.

Communities nationwide are achieving similar results. In fact, the national cross-site evaluation of the DFC program reveals that DFC grantee communities have significantly lower substance use rates as compared to communities without DFC funded coalitions. For example, marijuana use among youth in grades 9-12 in communities where DFC coalitions exist dropped from 16.6% to 9.8% between 2005 and 2007 while marijuana use among youth surveyed in the national Youth Risk and Behavior Survey (YRBS) only dropped from 20.2% to 19.7%. We have attached an information sheet that further demonstrates the effectiveness of these programs throughout the country.

Historically, \$2 million has been allocated from within the total amount appropriated to the DFC program for the National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute, as authorized by section 805 of P.L. 109-469. This \$2 million is critical for FY 2010 because it will allow the Institute to provide the training, technical assistance, and evaluation components needed to make existing coalitions more effective in reducing drug abuse. Moreover, it will help increase the number and capacity of community coalitions nationwide.

Since the DFC program's inception, the available funding has been insufficient in meeting the overwhelming demand. Despite steady funding increases over most of the program's history, approximately two-thirds of the community coalitions that have applied have not been able to receive funding. It is, therefore, essential that \$100 million is appropriated in FY 2010 for the DFC program, including \$2 million from within the total amount appropriated for the Institute, to ensure that the maximum number of communities nationwide can build and sustain effective community coalitions to reduce youth drug use. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Sander Levin  
Member of Congress

Mark Souder  
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress



Judy Biggert  
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress



Geoff Davis  
Member of Congress



Lois Capps  
Member of Congress



Henry "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress

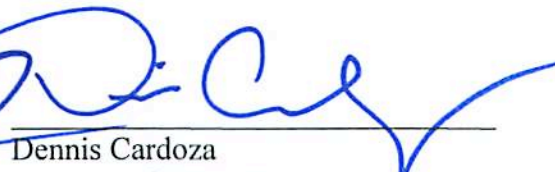


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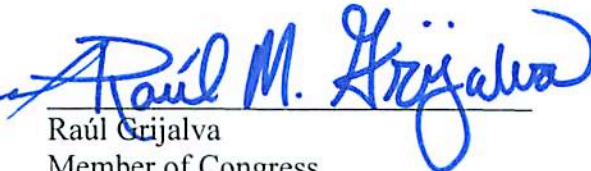


Sam Graves  
Member of Congress

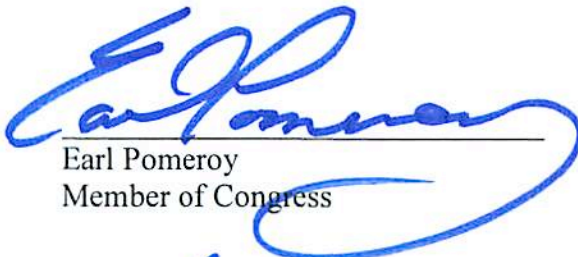
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Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress

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John Boozman  
Member of Congress



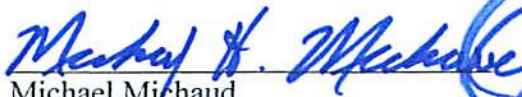
Mazie Hirono  
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Member of Congress



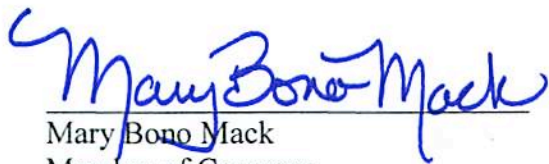
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